

Malden Historic District
(4104 Malden Drive)
Malden
Kanawha County
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-210-6

HABS
WVA,
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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Architectural and Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MALDEN HISTORIC DISTRICT, 4104 Malden Drive HABS No. WV-210-6
African Zion Baptist Church

Location: 4104 Malden Drive, Malden, Kanawha County, West Virginia
USGS Charleston East Quadrangle, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 17.451280.4238990

Present Owner: Board of Trustees, African Zion Baptist Church, c/o 202
Wayne Drive, Malden, West Virginia 25306

Present Use: Place of Worship

Significance: This church is regarded as the mother church for black Baptists in West Virginia. The congregation was formally organized circa 1852. Among its early members was Booker T. Washington, who came back to Malden after the Civil War and served as the church clerk and Sunday School leader in the late 1870s. The building was erected in 1872 and remains largely unchanged from its original condition. The building was entered in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and is one of three structures rated as pivotal in the Malden Historic District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1872.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The property was owned by the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Malden, West Virginia, who conveyed it to Charles Ferrell on April 11, 1867, as recorded at the Kanawha County Courthouse in Deed Book J, page 1133.

The property, owned by Charles Ferrell and his wife, Elizabeth Ferrell, was conveyed in turn to the African Zion Baptist Church Trustees on October 18, 1872, as recorded in Deed Book 29, pages 268-269. (The church building was under construction during the Ferrell ownership of the land, apparantly.)

4. Alterations and additions: The church was enlarged slightly in 1940 by an addition to the rear (east) end containing a lavatory and a storage space. The interior was refurbished circa 1940, the ceiling and the walls above the wainscoting being covered with lightweight acoustical mineral board. The roof and steeple were resurfaced with asphalt shingles in 1951. The wooden entrance steps were replaced by concrete steps circa 1963. The floor was carpeted in 1972.

B. Historical Context:

The African Zion Baptist Church merits particular recognition as the mother church of black Baptists in West Virginia. It is also the progenitor of associations dedicated to the furtherance of religious education for that group. Among its noted members was "Father" Lewis Rice, founder of the church and a leader of the early black community in the Kanawha Valley.

The church is also closely associated with the noted educator Booker T. Washington, whose family moved to Malden following the abolition of slavery. Washington was a member of the church as an adolescent and retained membership there until his death. After attending Hampton Institute, he returned to Malden in 1875 to teach in the school. During his three-year stay, Washington supervised the Sunday School he had attended as a youth.

The African Zion Baptist Church was entered on the National Register of Historic Places on December 27, 1974.

Prepared by Donna Sue White
Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey Team
June 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This simple rectangular frame structure is sheathed in white-painted clapboards. The segmentally arched window architraves add a touch of elegance, and a square belfry with a short pyramidal steeple astride the front gable proclaims its function as a church.
2. Condition of fabric: Well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This one-story church is three bays wide and two bays deep, measuring approximately 24'-3" in overall width and 42'-10" in overall depth. The building is a simple rectangular block with a gabled roof topped by a square-plan belfry with a pyramidal steeple. The top of the steeple is approximately 41'-0" above grade. To the east, a shed-roofed addition occurs.
2. Foundations: Stuccoed brick.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Exterior walls are clapboarded. The clapboards average 4-3/4" in width and are painted white. The only exception is the lower portion of the belfry, which is covered in the same green asphalt shingles as those used on the roof.
4. Structural system, framing: The structural system appears to be wooden framing sheathed in such a manner that examination of joinery techniques is not possible. It would appear to be unremarkable.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: At the front entrance, three concrete steps, the top one of which is wider than those below it, lead to the door. These steps are covered by a small overhanging roof of concave contour, this roof being cantilevered from the front wall.
6. Chimneys: No chimneys occur on this building, though a metal vent stack for a gas heater extends vertically beyond the cornice level on the north side.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The only exterior doors are the pair of front doors. These are four-panel wooden doors swinging inward. They are painted white.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Windows in the north, west and east walls are double-sash, four-over-four units. In each, the lower edge of the upper member of the top sash is curved to correspond with a similarly arched exterior frame. The interior frame is square-headed. Both interior and exterior frames are extremely simple. Window sashes are painted black on the exterior. Frames are painted white. Shutters do not occur at present, nor do they appear to have been used in the past. Windows in the east end seem to have been

identical to those of the other walls but have been partially closed by the low shed-roof line of this addition to the rear of the building. Above the roof line of this addition, the windows remain in their earlier state. The lower sashes of all windows currently have translucent glass with a mottled pattern.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The major roof shape is a simple gabled structure. The pyramidal steeple atop the belfry is very steep throughout the upper three-fourths of its height and very shallow in the lower one-fourth. A simple shed roof sloping toward the east covers the small rear addition. All roofs are covered in green asphalt shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Treatment of cornices and eaves is extremely simple, consisting of one or more layers of narrow fascia boards. Just below the eaves, a plain fascia occurs at the wall surface on the main block. This fascia is approximately twelve inches wide on the west and east walls and nine inches wide on the south and north walls. Immediately below the fascia, narrow inverted thumb moldings terminate vertical corner boards, suggesting unfluted corner pilasters.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: The pyramidal belfry/steeple structure consists of a shaft approximately six feet square. Each face displays a pair of louvered openings, the tops of which are terminated in a triangular fashion similar to that of the gabled roof immediately below.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The single-story structure consists of a rectangular sanctuary having a raised platform across approximately two-thirds of the extreme east end. Movable pews create a central aisle running east/west from the entrance doors. A metal pipe railing runs along the north half of the platform to separate the choir area from the congregation. doors located beneath the remainder of the two east windows lead into a storage closet and a restroom beyond.
2. Flooring: Said to have been of exposed wooden planking originally, the entire floor in the sanctuary is covered with carpet. Vinyl asbestos floor covering is used in the rear addition.

3. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls have been surfaced with lightweight acoustical mineral board which has been painted. This covering is applied in panels 1'-4" wide, the seams remaining untaped. The horizontal ceiling is covered in a similar material in panels measuring 1'-4" by 2'-8"; it is also painted. Wall surfaces below a height of 3'-0" above the finished floor level consist of a wainscot of 3-1/2" painted vertical planks beaded in such a manner as to suggest planking half this width.
4. Doorways and doors: The only interior doors are those opening into the storage room and restroom areas. The door to the left is constructed of vertical planks similar to those of the wainscot while that to the right is a five-panel wooden door.
5. Mechanical equipment: The present heating system consists of two gas heaters, one being located along the north wall and vented through it while the other is located along the south wall and is not vented.

D. Site:

1. General setting: The church sits on a very restricted site fronted by Malden Drive and separated from it by a hedge and a series of five concrete-filled metal posts. To the south lies a parking lot, also separated from the church by metal posts. A wire fence separates the building from a house immediately to the north. To the south is a garage. Side yards range in width from one to ten feet.

Prepared by James Murray Howard
Project Supervisor
Historic American Buildings Survey
June 1979

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. Old Views: Photographs of the African Zion Baptist Church can be found on file at the Department of Archives and History in the State Capitol Complex, Charleston, West Virginia.
2. Bibliography:
 - a. Primary and unpublished sources:
Deed Book, Kanawha County Courthouse Records.
Deed Book 29 at page 268-9.

Deed Book, Kanawha County Courthouse Records

Deed Book J at page 1133.

National Register of Historic Places, United States
Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Office of
Archeology and Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

b. Secondary and published sources:

85th Anniversary Session of the West Virginia Baptist State
Convention, 1963, page 11.

c. Interviews:

Mrs. Minnie Wayne Cooper, 202 Wayne Drive, Malden, West
Virginia. Her grandmother was a founding member of the
African Zion Baptist Church. Mrs. Cooper is a lifelong
member and for many years has been church clerk.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) with funding from the West Virginia Department of Culture and History. The recording was completed under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect of HABS, in the HABS field office in Charleston, West Virginia. Recording was carried out during the summer of 1979 by James Murray Howard (University of Illinois), Project Supervisor; Donna White, Project Historian; and Student Architects James Barrett Garrison (Carnegie-Mellon University) and Keith Edward Soto (University of Florida). The photographs were taken by Walter Smalling, Jr., Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service Photographer.